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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000585

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DEPT FOR AF/SPG, AF/SE WILLIAMSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/15/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [SU](#)  
SUBJECT: NO PROGRESS ON JMST CHIEF MEDIATOR; POSSIBLE  
CONFERENCE ON DPA HOSTED BY SLM-MM

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)  
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¶1. (C) SUMMARY: In two meetings with poloffs on April 14, the AU's Chief Mediator of the JMST, Sam Ibok, stated that there are no promising candidates for the position for UNAMID's Chief Mediator now that Mohamed Sahnoun has declined the job. Ibok also stated that he would be leaving his position in the coming weeks. In a separate meeting earlier in the day, Ibok and Ali Traio (a senior advisor to Minni Minnawi) both agreed that SLM-Minni Minnawi (SLM-MM) needs to be more assertive and proposed a conference on DPA implementation corresponding with its two year anniversary. See paragraph 6 for action request regarding this proposed conference. END SUMMARY.

IF NOT SAHNOUN, THEN WHO?

¶2. (C) On April 14, Sam Ibok, AU Mediator assigned to UNAMID, S Joint Mediation Support Team (JMST), told poloffs in two separate meetings that there has been no progress finding a joint Chief Mediator to head the JMST. Ibok stated that former Algerian Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun had formally declined the offer. Ibok stated that the European Union is now pushing Kenyan General Lazaro Sumbeiywo for the job, though Ibok expressed a number of concerns regarding his candidacy. According to Ibok, the National Congress Party (NCP) will not likely accept Sumbeiywo without a fight, further delaying the appointment of a chief negotiator. Ibok added that given Sumbeiywo's role in the CPA, Darfur's rebels would expect nothing less than an equivalent deal for Darfur, raising their expectations inappropriately high. Ibok stated that other names have been proposed as well, although most of them are "experienced" if not decrepit individuals well into their seventies. Ibok stated that UNAMID needs someone young, energetic, and innovative to fill the position. Poloff asked Ibok for a list of his ideal candidates and he promised to deliver next week.

IBOK'S DAYS ARE NUMBERED

¶3. (C) Ibok stated that he has become very frustrated with UNAMID's operations, saying, "you all know about all of the problems that we have" and that he would be leaving his position "within weeks." He said that he would likely be returning to a position with the UN in New York. He stated that he was looking forward to leaving Sudan as "you can't put your life on hold forever." Ibok stated that he would be traveling to London this week to start work on the British initiative on Darfur recently announced by Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

SLM-MM HOSTED CONFERENCE ON DPA

¶4. (C) In an earlier meeting between Ibok, poloffs, and MP

Ali Traio (chairman of the Darfur Reconstruction and Development Fund (DRDF) and advisor to Minni Minnawi), Ibok urged SLM-MM to be more proactive in pushing forward their agenda and highlighting the importance of the Darfur Peace Agreement. After listening to a long list of complaints from Traio, Ibok stated that Minni Minnawi and his SLM members should consider organizing a conference to highlight the implementation of the DPA in the coming months, perhaps associated with the two-year anniversary of the signing of the DPA (in May).

15. (C) Ibok stated that if the DPA is at least partially implemented, hosting a conference would empower Minnawi to play a greater role in the government and the peace process. Ibok stated that as the main DPA signatory and still, despite defections, the strongest force on the ground (of both signatories and non-signatories,) SLM-MM could play a role in convincing other groups to lay down their arms. Ibok suggested that Ibok stated that even if the Government of Sudan does not approve of this, Minnawi should "just go ahead and hold the conference anyway." According to Ibok, many countries may agree to a non-military logistical support program for SLM-MM if proposed in a constructive and detailed manner in an appropriate venue. Traio stated that Minnawi has already considered proposing a conference on DPA implementation, and that SLM-MM is receptive to the idea. He said that the likely venue of the conference would be in El-Fasher and that a small amount of financial assistance would be required to get the conference moving.

#### ACTION REQUEST

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16. (C) Post requests AF/SPG's assistance in providing funds to SLM-MM for a conference on DPA implementation to be held in the next three months. Approximately \$10,000 should be

KHARTOUM 00000585 002 OF 002

sufficient for transport for attendees, planning and conducting a two-day conference in El-Fasher. We believe this modest investment in highlighting the only existing Darfur peace deal - and its many flaws - is well worth the cost.  
FERNANDEZ